

Apple Bites

Luajean Bryan Named Tennessee Teacher of the Year

Luajean Bryan, in her 36th year of teaching in Tennessee, was named 2009 Teacher of the Year during the annual banquet in Nashville September 23.

"What motivates both me and my classes is the students' success in mathematics when learning becomes meaningful to them," Ms. Bryan wrote via email when asked what motivates her in her professional life.

"[Students] open doors of opportunities for themselves when they can master higher-level math. This thrill of accomplishment motivates both

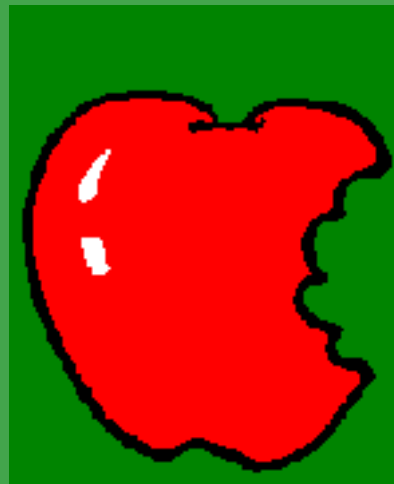
the teacher and the students," Ms. Bryan continued. "Hearing from former students who share success stories keeps me on track with what will work best and where the emphasis should lie. Students are my motivators. Also, having encouraging administrators is important to me."

Ms. Bryan teaches 10th – 12th grade pre-calculus, calculus, algebra II and statistics. She now will represent Tennessee in the National Teacher of the Year competition and have the opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C. for a recognition ceremony and events.



TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

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*Helping
Teachers Teach
&
Children Learn*

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Classroom Teacher Trey Duke Receives Milken Educator Award

Fifth-grade Rutherford County teacher Trey Duke has been selected as Tennessee's recipient of the 2008 Milken Educator Award. Each year, the Milken Family Foundation honors educators across the country for their accomplishments and dedication to education. Mr. Duke, in the classroom just five years, has captured the attention and reverence of his supervisors and students.

"There are many proficient teachers in education," says Lisa Bogle, Elementary Instruction Coordinator for Rutherford County. "There are also teachers who, because of their commitment to students and to the profession, must be considered outstanding. Trey Duke is truly outstanding."

Colleagues note how attuned Mr. Duke is to the needs of individual students, both in his approach to instruction and his attention to their developmental needs. In 2007, his students performance exceeded the system and state in nearly every area.

In the classroom, Mr. Duke uses creative instructional strategies such as kinesthetic and musical lessons to help



Trey Duke, a 5th-grade teacher at Stewart's Creek Elementary, sits among students as he is surprised during an assembly to be named a 2008 Milken Educator Award winner. Duke is the only Tennessee teacher to receive the national award this year.

students master content. He has also taken an active leadership role at the school and system level.

Mr. Duke was surprised with the award and a \$25,000 check October 28 in a ceremony at his school, Stewart's Creek Elementary in Smyrna. Fifty-six Tennessee educators have been honored by the Milken Family Foundation since 1992. To view a history of Tennessee Milken award recipients, visit www.mff.org/mea/mea.taf?page=searchlist&st=tn.



The National Teachers Hall of Fame annually honors five teachers who have demonstrated commitment and dedication to teaching our nation's children. Anyone may nominate a teacher by completing a nomination packet. Candidates must be certified public or nonpublic classroom teachers with at least 20 years experience teaching in grades preK-12.

Nomination forms may be obtained by calling 800-96-TEACH, or by writing The National Teachers Hall of Fame, 1200 Commercial St., Box 4017, Emporia, KS 66801. For further information about the NTHF, please visit their website at www.nthf.org.

Deadline is January 1 of the nominating year.

Outstanding TN Schools Earn National Award

Northwest Elementary School
(Fayette County)
Walnut Grove Elementary School
(Hardin County)
Mountain City Elementary School
(Johnson County)
Lawrenceburg Elementary School
(Lawrence County)
John P. Freeman Optional School
(Memphis)
Greeneville High School
(Greeneville)

Congratulations to six Tennessee schools for being named Blue Ribbon Schools by the U.S. Department of Education.

Blue Ribbon Schools are nominated either for achieving very high levels of student performance with at least 40 percent of students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds; or schools that performed in the top 10 percent in the state on state tests; or private schools that performed in the top 10 percent in the nation on nationally normed tests.

Six is the maximum number of schools that may be recognized in each state. Tennessee is proud that all six 2008 nominees were selected after rigorous independent review of school performance.

"Foundations in Personal Finance"
Financial Literacy Teacher Training Institute

December 5-6, 2008
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Financial Peace Conference Center
Brentwood, TN

Highlights of the conference include:

- In-depth review of Foundations in Personal Finance Curriculum
- Introduction by Dave Ramsey
- Training sessions led by certified teachers and curriculum developers
- Teaching strategies on working with video-based curriculum
- Hands-on review of activities, assessments and lesson plans

This training is FREE for all participants, and you will receive the approved training certificate for Tennessee Course 3496 in Personal Finance at completion.

For more information, contact Jason Lowrey at (888) 227-3223 ext. 5240 or at Jason.lowrey@daveramsey.com.

Dr. David Timbs Honored with Supervisor of the Year Award

Dr. David Timbs, Supervisor of Instruction for Johnson County Schools, has been awarded the honor of 2008-09 Tennessee Supervisor of the Year. Dr. Timbs has built his leadership style around empowering teachers with the skills they need to be exceptional educators. He initiated school-level data coaching teams to improve the use of student data in guiding how teachers teach. That effort has helped raise value-added and achievement scores

from C's and D's to A's.

He places emphasis on assessment literacy, best practices in instruction, and curriculum aligned with the standards that define what students should learn. Dr. Timbs has shared and collaborated with educators from schools across the state, region, nation and world.

He was presented the award September 24 during an award ceremony in conjunction with the 2008 Tennessee Education LEADership Conference.

Warner Ross Named Principal of the Year

Warner Ross, currently principal of Bolivar Middle School in Hardeman County, has been named Tennessee's 2008-09 Principal of the Year. Mr. Ross' administrative career has been marked by the successful implementation of programs that raise student achievement and strengthen the teaching team. One program, Project Grade Recovery, helped the school achieve a 98 percent grade completion/promotion rate.

'He strives to assist students in realizing what they can do instead of focusing on what was done earlier in their educational careers,' a colleague said of him.

Mr. Ross is also an active member of the Tennessee Army National Guard. He was presented the award September 24 during an award ceremony in conjunction with the 2008 Tennessee Education LEADership Conference in Nashville.



Tennessee school systems took time to recognize their school bus drivers during Tennessee School Bus Driver Appreciation Week October 20 - 24.

Tennessee Takes Learning Outdoors

Tennessee schools are finding ways to take learning out into the world with outdoor classrooms supported by Project CENTS, a joint environmental education program of the department of education and the department of environment and conservation. Forrest School in Marshall County, Greenville Middle in Greenville, and Wallace A. Smith School in Hamilton County each received Tennessee Outdoor Classroom grants to use the outdoors to further academic pursuits.

“It’s important for students to know how the learning that takes place within school walls relates to the world outside,” Education Commissioner Timothy Webb said. “These projects bring learning to life, allowing students to practice important skills while gaining respect for the environment.”

Forrest School’s plan includes a space for classes to gather, edible gardens, and gardens to attract birds and butterflies. Teachers of science, agriculture, mathematics, language arts, social studies, wellness,

health, drama, foreign language, art, music and special education all have plans to use this outdoor space to help students understand state curriculum standards.

Greenville Middle School will use an organic vegetable garden to introduce students and the community to safe,

homegrown foods while teaching the skills to produce them. The school plans to use the garden for hands-on learning experiences in science, mathematics, language arts, social studies, art, foreign languages, wellness, Title One, Applied Skills, and Read 180.

Wallace A. Smith Elementary School is expanding an existing outdoor classroom by adding a small greenhouse and garden pond to their large multi-purpose garden. Students will explore science standards related to plant

and animal life, and weather. Third and fourth graders will be able to extend the experience gained in the Smart TN Financial Fitness for Life Program by propagating plants in the greenhouse and selling them. Art and language arts classes will use the area as a quiet place to be creative.

“New research continues to support using the school and community environment as a framework on which to build the academic and social skills so vital to all students,”

said Tami Coleman, Project CENTS Coordinator. “Outdoor classrooms assist educators in connecting state curriculum standards to the natural world without need of a bus or a field trip permission slip.”

All Tennessee schools were eligible to apply for up to \$3,000. Examples of outdoor classrooms may include wetlands, animal sanctuaries, recycling areas, weather stations, nature trails and outdoor math labs. For additional information, visit www.eein-tennessee.org.



Tennessee Parents Learn to Be Child's First Teacher

Tennessee is the beneficiary of an initiative to train parents to give their children a strong foundation for learning at home. The Dollar General Corporation is funding the introduction of a *Love, Read, Learn!*, a program started by Volunteer USA Foundation. *Love, Read, Learn!* teaches parents about the stages of childhood development and age-appropriate educational activities to engage their children.

Tennessee schools electing to participate will host a free, one-hour literacy training for parents who will

leave with literacy toolkits to use at home.

Volunteer USA Foundation is a non-profit organization founded in Florida in 2007 with a focus on mentoring and literacy programs. The Foundation cites research that shows how reading with children develops early literacy skills and succeed in school.

Training has been underway this fall to train local trainers across Tennessee to work with parents. Participating schools can go online to register and receive materials.

Love, Read, Learn

parent workshops will cover:

- Questions parents can ask teachers about their child's academic progress and goal setting
- When and what to read to your child
- Reading games parents can play with their children to reinforce literacy skills
- Checklist of reading skills that typically develop during 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade

Thinkfinity Connects TN Educators, Parents with Online Learning Tools

Tennessee educators, parents and students can tap into lesson plans, games and activities aligned to Tennessee's learning standards through Thinkfinity.org, an online learning portal provided by a grant from the Verizon Foundation. The professional development component trains teachers in finding and implementing effective online resources for classroom use. Visit www.Thinkfinity.org or www.state.tn.us/education/

[thinkfinity](http://thinkfinity.org) to learn more

The following discipline-specific Web sites have been developed with Thinkfinity content partners:

Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
The National Council on Economic Education
The National Endowment for the Humanities
The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
The International Reading Association
The American Assoc. for the Advancement of Science
National Geographic
The Smithsonian National Museum of American History
The National Center for Family Literacy
The National Council of Teachers of English
ProLiteracy Worldwide